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ABSTRACT

Children of prison inmates are the hidden victims of their parents' crimes. Like children of divorced or deceased parents, they often show signs of distress caused by the lack of a stable home life and parental separation. Many times they follow their parents' criminal behavior patterns. To keep mothers and daughters connected and to enhance parenting skills, Girl Scouts Beyond Bars involves mothers in their daughters' lives through a unique partnership between a youth services organization and State and local corrections departments. The program has been implemented in Maryland, Florida, Ohio, and Arizona. Although the partnership has demonstrated its ability to increase mother-daughter visitation time, the long-term effects of breaking the cycle of criminal behavior will require a more comprehensive approach on the part of the correctional institution, the Girl Scout Council, and the mothers involved. This program focus first discusses the social and judicial context for this program, then describes the first four programs in operation, and concludes with an examination of the broader issues that these programs should confront to effectively change the lives of youths at risk. (JBJ)

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Program Focus

ED 389 986

Keeping Incarcerated Mothers and Their Daughters Together:

Girl Scouts Beyond Bars

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Keeping Incarcerated Mothers and Their Daughters Together: Girl Scouts Beyond Bars

by Marilyn C. Moses

"Girl Scouts Beyond Bars" may sound like a tabloid headline. It is not meant, however, to convey the notion of a group of Girl Scouts absconding with the proceeds from their annual cookie sale. It designates an inmate mother-child visitation program that began as a National Institute of Justice (NIJ) demonstration project in November 1992.

This first-of-its-kind Girl Scout troop consists of more than 30 daughters whose mothers live at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women[1] (MCIW). The girls meet with their mothers at the corrections facility 2 Saturdays a month, and on alternate Saturdays they meet at a Baltimore church where they work closely with Girl Scout volunteers on projects just as girls in other troops would.

In July 1993 just 8 months after the first troop meeting, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges honored the program with its annual "Unique and Innovative Project" award. The Maryland

Highlights

Children of prison inmates are the hidden victims of their parents' crimes. Like children of divorced or deceased parents, they often show signs of distress caused by the lack of a stable home life and parental separation, such as depression, aggression, poor school performance, and truancy. Many times they also follow their parents' criminal behavior patterns. To keep mothers and daughters connected and to enhance parenting skills, Girl Scouts Beyond Bars involves mothers in their daughters' lives through a unique partnership between a youth services organization and State and local corrections departments.

Girl Scouts Beyond Bars programs have been implemented in the following States:

- **Maryland.** In 1992 the pilot program began at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women. More than 30 girls now visit their mothers 2 Saturdays each month. On alternate Saturdays, they attend meetings at a community church, just as girls in other troops would. Before the Girl Scout program started, many of these girls rarely visited their incarcerated mothers.
- **Florida.** Its first program started at the Jefferson Correctional Institution near Tallahassee in early 1994, and a second program soon followed in Fort Lauderdale. The Florida Department of Corrections hopes to expand the program to correctional facilities throughout the State. The program includes formal parenting instruction and transitional services for the mothers and monitoring of the children's school performance, and collaboration with mental health care providers.
- **Ohio.** The Seal of Ohio Girl Scout Council launched the first program in a prerelease center, the Franklin Pre-Release Center in Columbus. When the Girl Scout council expanded the program to the Ohio Reformatory for Women in 1994, Ohio became the first to connect the inprison program with the transition to home.
- **Arizona.** Maricopa County (Phoenix) is the first jail site in the country to form a Girl Scouts Beyond Bars partnership. Parents Anonymous and Big Brothers/Big Sisters have also joined the effort.

Girl Scout councils in four other States have also begun Girl Scouts Beyond Bars programs with their corrections partners. While the partnership has demonstrated its ability to increase mother-daughter visitation time, the long-term effect of breaking the cycle of criminal behavior will require a more comprehensive approach on the part of the correctional institution, the Girl Scout council, and the mothers involved.

The program, however, may be used as a model to involve more youth service organizations in crime prevention. Partnerships should include many community service organizations that can provide the range of support services for incarcerated parents and their children to stop negative social behaviors and to break intergenerational cycles of involvement in crime.

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Criminal Justice Association followed in December 1994 with its first "Outstanding Program" award.

NIJ has helped start similar Girl Scout programs in several other correctional institutions: the Jefferson Correctional Institution in Monticello, Florida; Broward Correctional Institution in Pembroke Pines, Florida; Franklin Pre-Release in Columbus, Ohio; the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville; the Estrella Jail in Phoenix, Arizona; the Delaware Women's Correctional Institution; the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in New Jersey; the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women; and the California Rehabilitation Center in Norco. NIJ is currently working with Girl Scout and corrections officials from 10 other States who are also interested in replicating the program.

This Program Focus first discusses the social and judicial context for this unique program, then describes the first four programs in operation, and concludes with an examination of the broader issues that these programs should confront to effectively change the lives of youths at risk.

Children, the Hidden Victims

Parental separation is difficult for children in any circumstance. Many of the adverse effects observed in children of incarcerated persons are also consistent with studies of children placed in foster care, those whose parents have divorced, and those who have experienced the death of a parent.[2]

Maryland correctional officials believe that about 80 percent of the women at MCIW are mothers. "We estimate that for every mother incarcerated at MCIW, three children are affected," reported Maryland's Deputy Commissioner of Corrections Melanie C. Pereira.

"When children don't know, they fantasize," observed Lisa Cid, the Girl Scout Council of Maryland's (GSCM's) executive director. "They create an image of what happened to Mommy—and some of those imaginary pictures are horrible. They envision their mothers in chains."

People on both sides of the prison fence suffer emotionally. "You need only impose a sentence of incarceration on a mother whose children are present to know what a terrible impact it has on the children," said Judge Carol E. Smith.[4] Judge Smith also observed that children are the hidden victims of their parents' crimes and subsequent incarceration as well as their inability to provide a stable, prosocial home environment.[4] Studies have shown that children of incarcerated persons are more likely to experience:

- Anxiety, depression, and aggression.[5]
- Decline in school performance, attention disorders, and truancy.[6]
- Teen pregnancy and symptoms of post-traumatic stress.[7]

Beyond these problems, evidence indicates that many of these children follow their parents into the criminal justice system. Sadly, Deputy Commissioner Pereira's observation is one that many others could make: "I've been in corrections for 18 years and I've seen three generations of people in facilities—grandmother, mother, and daughter at the same time. I've seen where the mother was here, gave birth to a child, and the child is now here."

A reliable measure to assess the risk that children of incarcerated persons have of becoming involved in the criminal justice system is not available. One study estimated that children with imprisoned parents may be almost six times more likely than their counterparts to become incarcerated.[8] A survey of youth in custody indicated that about a third reported that a parent had been incarcerated at some time; a quarter said a brother or sister had been incarcerated.[9] (See "Interfamilial Incarceration.")

Interfamilial Incarceration

Survey questions posed to women in MCIW:

Is the father of any of your children incarcerated now?

Yes	19.1%
Don't know	3.3

Are any other members of your family incarcerated now?

Yes	31.2%

Of those answering "yes":

Brother	62.2 %
Other (nephews, cousins, uncles)	19.5
Father	6.1
Mother	3.7
Sister	3.7
Husband	1.2
Son	1.2

Source: Preliminary results of a survey administered by the Maryland Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families in 1992.

Since the Maryland program began, one Girl Scout's older sister (who did not participate in the program) has already followed her mother into MCIW. Now the teenage Girl Scout has a mother and sister in prison at the same time. The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars (GSBB) program may just keep her from following them. It has the potential of preventing many daughters from following in their mothers' footsteps.

The Partnership

The GSBB program was created by NIJ. It is based on a unique partnership between correctional departments and a major youth service organization established to respond to the needs of girls whose

mothers are incarcerated and perceived inadequacies of inprison visitation programs. Previously few organized programs encouraged children to visit their parents. Those few programs have usually depended on one dynamic leader, someone from within the correctional institution or from the community. Thus, many of these programs have had a short life expectancy. Existing programs have also rarely offered anything to the child or parent beyond the visit itself.

Considering these observations and the findings of the Carnegie Corporation of New York's Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs, the GSBB program seemed a logical response. The Carnegie Foundation study found that youth service organizations "reach many young people, although usually not the ones who need service the most, but their potential remains largely untapped."[10] By creating a partnership between the Girl Scouts and prisons, the potential to reach some of those young people in need could be realized.

The partnership concept is also supported by the Maryland Governor's Committee to Study Sentencing and Correctional Alternatives for Women Convicted of Crime.[11] Judge Kathleen O'Ferrall Friedman noted, "While the committee did not specifically call for such a partnership, it offers much of what the committee had hoped for; it provides an opportunity for increased as well as supervised visits by children. It also offers the children a chance to be involved with adult Girl Scout volunteers from the community. These women provide an opportunity for the girls to see that different life choices can be made."[12]

It takes a whole village to raise a child.

The African proverb indicating the importance of the community in influencing the way a child grows up has new meaning in the United States today. Many major youth service organizations were built on a family model. These organizations historically relied on parents to deliver their program and provide leadership for youths. Most frequently mothers and fathers served as troop leaders or den mothers. Parents typically purchased the uniforms, books, and supplies. They shared carpooling responsibilities and supervised cookie sales or staffed the hot dog stand at the community fair to raise money for camping trips and other expeditions.

"Family life in America has changed, and so have the Nation's communities. Fewer and fewer young adolescents are raised by a caring, supportive family surrounded by a caring, supportive community," according to the Carnegie task force.[13]

This situation creates a major challenge for youth organizations. Underfunded youth service organizations, built on a family model, are now faced with the need to provide services to children of "zero parent" families.[14]

Between 1986 and 1991, the State prison population grew 58 percent. During that time the number of incarcerated men increased by 53 percent, while the population of incarcerated women increased by 75 percent.[15] Families are more likely to be broken by a woman's confinement within the criminal justice system than by a man's.[16] Children whose mothers are incarcerated obviously fit the "zero parent" profile.

Judge Friedman explained, "The Governor's committee found that a vast majority of incarcerated Maryland women are not only parents but single parents. When mothers are imprisoned, their children are rarely able to stay with the other parent. Quite often the father is altogether absent from the child's life, or is in prison himself. Incarcerated mothers must rely on other family members, many times grandparents, friends, or as a last resort on foster care." (See "Caregivers of Children During MCIW Mothers' Incarceration.")

When a mother is incarcerated, a grandparent most commonly assumes care of the child. Most grandparents had not contemplated full-time care of their grandchildren at this stage in their lives. Many are not physically or financially able to provide the ideal level of care their grandchildren need.[17] If a grandparent cannot take responsibility for the child, usually other family members will take in the

Photo by Phil Sears for the *Tallahassee Democrat*

At the end of a Girl Scouts Beyond Bars meeting, Serena embraces her daughter. Without the program the two might not have seen each other until Serena's release from Florida's Jefferson County Correctional Institution.

child. Frequently those relatives have their own children whose needs understandably may take priority.

Robin Gamble, GSCM's project coordinator, said, "We cannot ask more of the child's caregiver than has already been asked in this circumstance. We must rely on dedicated volunteers from the community. These women have taken a personal interest in these girls and have become the village—they are doing what parents ordinarily would do."

Competition for volunteer time is intense. Ms. Gamble said, "With such great demands on time, frequently people are looking for a limited, one-shot, volunteer experience in which a tangible result can be immediately observed. That type of volunteer is needed in our program, but what is harder to find are committed volunteers who will be there for the children week after week."

The Maryland Demonstration Project

Except for the atypical location with metal detectors, clanging gates, and razorwire fences, the mother-daughter gatherings at MCIW differ little from Girl Scout meetings held in the community. "They are much the same, the only difference might be the presence of so many mothers," said volunteer Charlotte Lee.

The daughters, who range in age from 5 to 17, join their mothers 2 Saturdays each month for a Girl Scout meeting in the prison gymnasium. During these 2-hour sessions, the women spend supervised time with their daughters in structured play and working on troop projects.

"When the idea was presented to me, my first thought was 'are you crazy?'" said Deputy Commissioner Pereira. "Afterwards the idea made sense. The strength of this visitation program is that it offers the child more than just a visit."

The troop meetings are both fun and educational. Activities have had varied themes such as aerobics, a miniscience fair, and arts and crafts. More serious issues have also been addressed in a creative manner. Mothers and their daughters attended a puppet show on violence prevention. Sessions on various contemporary and family life issues have also been held on such topics as self esteem, drug abuse, relationships, coping with family crises, anatomy and physiology of the reproductive system, and teenage pregnancy prevention.

On alternate Saturdays, when the girls are not meeting with their mothers at MCIW, they meet at Corpus Christi Church in downtown Baltimore to finish projects and start new ones. They spend time with Girl Scout volunteers, who serve as mentors, and with new friends in the troop.

Occasionally, the girls take field trips as part of the broader Girl Scout program in the community. Such activities have included a leadership conference at a beach resort with more than 100 other Girl Scouts from across the State, a day camp experience, a Halloween sleep-over, a trip to the Baltimore Museum of Industry, and an evening of roller skating. Several girls also attended an annual sleep-over and activity night at a local shopping mall with 400 other Girl Scouts.

Focus on the mothers. Using the prison and community troop meetings as a catalyst, the program is opening avenues of communication between parent and child. One mother remarked, "I've gotten three letters from my daughter this week. That never happened before the Girl Scouts."

As the Scout slogan says, "The Girl Is First in Girl Scouts," but in this program the mother is just as important. In addition to increased visiting time, one aim of the program is to enable the mothers to assume responsibility and develop organizational skills. With Girl Scout staff support, the mothers take responsibility for some of the planning for the mother-daughter meetings. The correction facility's limit of a 1-hour monthly planning session for mothers and Girl Scout staff limits the mothers' ability to take total charge of planning.

Recently, however, the mothers did organize a ceremony to honor the volunteers who make the program possible. Volunteer Marva Williams said, "I never knew our efforts meant so much to the mothers. I guess they've got me for another year." Indeed it was an impressive affair. To accomplish it, however, the mothers met for at least five 1-hour planning sessions over several months and had help from Girl Scout staff.

Training in parenting. Before incarceration, most of MCIW's inmate mothers were their children's primary caretakers. (See "Profile of an MCIW Mother.") Although many of these mothers have not been ideal parents,[18] most will resume their parental role when released.

Given these realities, a link between the Girl Scout program and MCIW's parenting education program and other in-

Caregivers of Children During MCIW Mothers' Incarceration

Grandparent	50.2 %
Other relative	21.5
Father	13.0
Foster care	7.7
Don't know	4.4
Institution	0.6

Source: Preliminary results of a survey administered by the Maryland Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families in 1992

Profile of an MCIW Mother

Average age	29.5
Average age of first intercourse	15.5
Average age of first pregnancy	17.9
Average number of children	2.4
Average child's age	7.5
68.7% were children's primary caregiver prior to arrest	
Were single parents	86.1
Received AFDC prior to arrest	45.8
Had not had a visit from children since imprisonment	28.6
Saw their children less than 1 time per month	35.7
Plan to reunite with their children after release	94.0
73.9% were women of color	
Had no high school diploma or GED	50.2
Were unemployed at the time of their arrest	65.1
Had been incarcerated before	36.1
Were physically or sexually abused (as a child, adult, or both)	51.7
Had a drug/alcohol-related arrest	52.9

Source: Preliminary results of a survey administered by the Maryland Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families in 1992.

stitutional services would seem sensible. However, the connection has not been made. Maryland correctional administrators cite their need to offer a variety of program opportunities to many women rather than concentrating limited resources on a few.[19]

Mothers receive some training from Girl Scout staff who help them plan and run the mother-daughter meetings, but they need more help with parenting skills. To supplement the Girl Scouts' work, the mothers work in a group setting with a licensed social worker for 1 hour each month. While no formal parenting instruction is offered in these monthly Saturday sessions, Deborah Pierson-Agbebakun volunteers her time to provide a forum for the women in the GSBB program to discuss various family-related concerns and to develop parenting-from-afar coping mechanisms.

"Late last year in one session we did a role-play," explained Pierson-Agbebakun. "In one scenario a mother had to respond to a telephone call from her daughter who said that she was pregnant. Later a teenage daughter in the program did call to tell her mother that she was 3 months pregnant. Obviously the mother was upset, but she said that the role-play she observed earlier helped her to respond appropriately."

Pierson-Agbebakun said she had seen mothers grow through the program over the past year. She stressed the importance of the program in terms of its continuing the mother-child bond: "If there has been little or no communication during the period of incarceration, imagine the stress both mother and daughter are likely to experience when they are suddenly expected to resume their relationship after the mother is released . . . . this program fills a tremendous need for positive communication during a period of mother-child separation."

However, Pierson-Agbebakun noted that the program falls short in two areas. First, the girls and their caregivers are not receiving the same mental health support through the programs as the mothers.[20] Second, when a mother is transferred to the Baltimore Pre-Release unit, she cannot attend the regular mother-daughter Girl Scout meetings. The transfer disrupts the mother-daughter communication that is essential to easing the mother's move back home.

Release from prison. Continuity and transitional issues are a concern for both Girl Scout and correctional administrators.[21] Involvement in the program does not end for the children once their mothers are released or transferred to prerelease. However, because the program lacks funds and enough volunteers, when a mother leaves MCIW, her daughter's participation in the Girl Scout program drops from 4 to 2 Saturdays a month. She can participate in the community troop meetings but not those at MCIW.

When the mothers return to the community, they are encouraged to continue to participate in the community-based program. In Maryland most girls continue in the program, but no mother has accompanied her daughter to more than one community meeting. The mothers' lack of continued involvement can be explained by work schedules, the demands of other family responsibilities, and in a few cases, a lack of interest.

"We recognize the importance of this program and the need to support the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM)," said Stephen A. Bocian of the Governor's Office of Justice Administration. "An advisory group of members from the criminal justice, legal, and business communities has been formed. We hope to draw on our collective resources to institutionalize, strengthen, and sustain this program for the girls and their mothers."

Operational issues. Women from all custody levels may participate in the Maryland program if they meet the requirements of the correctional institution's screening process. MCIW Warden James A. Carter explained, "Among other requirements, the women cannot have a history of child abuse and they must be infraction-free for 6 months before they can apply. They also must remain infraction-free while in the program. We have a few 'charter' members in this group who

have managed to abide by these rules for quite some time." Other requirements are outlined in a memorandum of understanding that each participant signs.

The mothers are not the only ones who must adhere to tough standards to participate in the program. Along with taking Girl Scout leadership training, the Girl Scout volunteers must undergo a criminal background check and participate in the department's volunteer orientation and inservice training, according to Peggy Hill, MCIW's volunteer activity coordinator.

"Contraband is always a concern in correctional institutions," said Assistant Warden Mitchell Franks. Mothers are strip-searched after each mother-daughter troop meeting. Thus far, no serious problems have arisen as a result of these contact visits. As one mother said, "If anything goes wrong, they will shut this program down."

"The most difficult aspect for us has been accommodating media requests," commented Assistant Warden Franks. More than 50 newspaper articles and substantial local and network television time have favorably depicted the program, the department of corrections, and the Girl Scouts.

Program cost. The program offers much in return for a relatively small outlay of funds. The budget for the Maryland troop is approximately $30,000 per year with transportation-related expenses accounting for nearly half. Included in that sum are Girl Scout support staff salaries, accident insurance, supplies, and other miscellaneous expenses.

When GSCM initially took on the project, funds from its operating budget were used to offset initial troop expenses. A one-time-only NIJ demonstration grant of $15,000 partially offset initial costs. The United Way of Central Maryland followed with a $10,000 grant and a continuation award of $8,500. Later a $20,000 award from the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services was approved to sustain the program for an additional year. With assistance from a recently formed advisory committee, a strategy for long-term funding is being developed.

The mothers have also assumed some financial responsibility for their daughters' troop. Last year MCIW residents and staff purchased more than 900 boxes of Girl Scout cookies from the girls. Funds generated from this sale were used to partially offset the salaries of paid Girl Scout staff assigned to the project and for incidental troop expenses.

Florida's Two-City Program

Tallahassee

Within a few months of hearing about GSBB, the Girl Scouts of the Apalachee Bend (GSAB) and officials from the Florida Department of Corrections had their own program. The Florida groups learned of NIJ's pilot program in October 1993. By late January 1994 they had developed a more intensive program at Jefferson Correctional Institution (JCI).

The Florida Governor's Office is impressed with what the Girl Scouts, the Florida Department of Corrections, and their collaborating partners have accomplished at JCI. In April 1995 the program was recognized by the Governor with his annual "Peace at Home: Preventing Domestic Violence" award.

Focus on training in parenting. Pat Chivers, GSAB's executive director, said, "We were really anxious to implement the visitation program here. I knew that the community would get behind this project. But I also knew we would need to put together a comprehensive program if we hoped to make a difference."

The Florida mother-daughter meeting schedule is similar to the Maryland program. Two Saturdays each month the girls work with their Girl Scout troop leaders in the community. On alternate Saturdays, the mothers and their daughters meet for troop meetings at JCI. Kerry Flack, assistant to Florida's secretary of corrections, pointed out how the program aimed, however, to expand on the Maryland pilot: "We wanted to do all that we could to support this program. Dr. Shayn Lloyd, JCI's staff psychologist, has been assigned to work with the mothers for at least an hour after each mother-daughter meeting."

Not only do the mothers at JCI meet for a longer time than they do in Maryland, they also meet more frequently. Mothers meet four times per month for almost 2 hours each session. Airie Sailor, a certified parenting instructor who works with the mothers, explained, "Our sessions are a hybrid of formal parenting instruction utilizing a text developed specifically for incarcerated parents and the Girl Scout contemporary issues material. Mothers

Photo by Phil Sears for the *Tallahassee Democrat*

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars programs help mothers and daughters stay connected during the mothers' incarceration.

also have adequate time to plan for upcoming Girl Scout troop meetings."

Partnerships. "Our program is small, 7 mothers and 12 girls, but growing monthly," said Donna Schestopol, GSAB's health promotion director. She pointed out, "We have coordinated our efforts with other local agencies. We work with the school system to monitor the girls' school performance. We are also collaborating with Community Intervention Program, Inc., and the Glenn Terrell Foundation, an organization that provides services to inmates and their families, to provide social services for the girls, their guardians, and the mothers after they are released. These services are provided at no cost to us. We are just taking advantage of existing community resources."

"Thus far three families in the program have been referred to us," said Deborah Lloyd, director of Community Intervention Program, Inc. "We have an ability to take our services to the home. Crisis intervention, behavioral counseling, resolving school concerns, and working with the caregiver on various parenting issues are some of the services we have provided."

Release from prison. "We are also targeting the mothers participating in the Girl Scout program for our services," said Manuel Godfrey, program director for the Glenn Terrell Foundation. While the mother in the Girl Scout program is in JCI, staff from the Glenn Terrell Foundation meet with her to determine her transition needs. A postrelease plan that includes job placement counseling and links to other needed social services is tailored to suit her specific needs. Once she is released, the staff continue to meet with her to carry out the plan. The staff also perform a family assessment and collaborate with other agencies and organizations in an effort to meet the entire family's needs. At least once each week, staff members continue meeting with the entire family until the social services are no longer needed.

Program cost. The council initially received a $37,500 Community Juvenile Justice Partnership Grant from the Attorney General's Office of Florida. A continuation award of $57,848 was recently received.

Program expansion. The program enjoys strong support from Secretary Harry K. Singletary of the Florida Department of Corrections: "I am not interested in what people say, I am interested in what they do. I am very impressed with what the Girl Scouts have done here. It is the department's goal to work with the Girl Scouts to make this program available in all four of our women's institutions and in our adult probation and parole populations. It is ambitious, but it is something we need to work toward if we intend to make a difference."

Fort Lauderdale

Secretary Singletary's goal for expansion in Florida is becoming a reality. In February 1994 Girl Scout executive directors from all 10 councils in Florida met in Tallahassee to learn about the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program. Jeannette Archer-Simons, executive director of the Girl Scouts of Broward County, attended the meeting. Archer-Simons embraced the program and saw it as an opportunity rather than an obstacle.

Although Archer-Simons had recently moved from Iowa and had been in her new position for only 3 days when she learned of the program, she immediately went to work building the partnerships necessary to implement a comprehensive program. "We now have the support of the Broward County Sheriff's Office, a commitment from Broward County School District, Mount Bethel Baptist Church, the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services, and Women in Distress, Henderson Mental Health Center, Cambell Hall, and Woodson Psychological Services," said Archer-Simons. "Our program has just gotten off the ground. I have high hopes for the program and I have every belief that my expectations will be fulfilled."

Ohio's Program

Just one phone call started things in Ohio. Once Dr. Barbara Nichols, warden of the Franklin Pre-Release Center in Columbus, Ohio, learned of the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program, she called Mary Ann Binder of the Seal of Ohio Girl Scout Council.

Binder said she saw a natural connection for her organization, which already had a longstanding relationship with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correc-

Awards to Girl Scouts Beyond Bars

In the past few years, the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program's promise has been recognized by a number of organizations with the following awards:

1993—National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Annual "Unique and Innovative Project" Award

1994—Maryland Criminal Justice Association's Annual "Outstanding Project" Award

1995—The Florida Governor's Annual "Peace at Home: Preventing Domestic Violence" Award

1995—The National Association of Counties' "Achievement" Award

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tions. The Ohio Corrections Training Academy had worked on a number of Girl Scout programs, including the "I'm Safe, Alert and Alive" program and the council's annual 20-hour Emergency Preparedness for Youth course. Inmates at the Madison Correctional Institution had created braille Girl Scout handbooks for blind and visually impaired scouts. Binder also helped the department in developing and presenting a course on disability awareness training. Binder therefore concluded, "When we learned of NIJ's Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program we knew it was a perfect fit for us."

The Ohio program operates much the same as the program in Maryland. Twenty-five girls, ages 5 to 11, meet with their mothers two times per month but only attend community troop meetings after their mothers have been released. The mothers meet for Girl Scout planning sessions, but the program offers no formal parenting instruction or mental health care.

Meeting on Tuesday evenings, the mothers and daughters eat a family-style dinner together at the facility. "It enables families to talk around the dinner table like you and I might do at home," Binder said. "In the beginning, the girls teased their mothers about being 'clean platers.' Some thought their mothers were living on a diet of bread and water."

Program cost. In its first year, the program was funded almost entirely from the Seal of Ohio Girl Scout Council's operating budget. The council is soliciting sustaining funding from foundations and other private sources. In addition to purchasing Girl Scout cookies from their daughters, the mothers recently raised $1,700 for the troop from a cosmetic sale they held within the institution.

Despite funding limitations, the Seal of Ohio Girl Scout Council provides a year-round program. In addition, the council went the extra mile and provided 18 of the 25 girls participating in the program the opportunity to attend residential Girl Scout summer camp.

Photo by Phil Sears for the *Tallahassee Democrat*

Inmate Catina discusses a homework lesson with her 7-year-old daughter, a member of the Brownies.

Program expansion. In December 1994 with a grant from The Columbus Foundation, the Seal of Ohio Girl Scout Council expanded its program to the Ohio Reformatory for Women. Ohio is the first State to have this program in its prison with transition to a prerelease center.

Claire Gribbin, a volunteer in the program, said, "This is the most important thing the Girl Scouts are doing right now."

Arizona's Jail Program

When speaking of the partnership formed with the Arizona Cactus-Pine Girl Scout Council (ACPGSC), Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County said, "The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program is just going back to the basics. Involvement in prevention programs is nothing new for sheriffs." The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office is the first in the Nation to implement the program in a jail.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office approached its local Girl Scout Council with the possibility of a partnership. "Attorney General Reno spoke about the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program at our last national conference," said Tamara Woodbury, ACPGSC's executive director. "I was intrigued by the idea and anxious to get started. However, we went into it with eyes open. Working in a jail setting, given the high population turnover, is an added challenge."

Women are to be carefully selected to participate in this program which has so far identified six mothers and seven girls to participate (according to Ellen Kirschbaum of the sheriff's office).

In July 1995 the National Association of Counties recognized the Phoenix Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program with its annual "Achievement" award.

Partnerships. The sheriff's office is also working diligently to forge links with other service organizations. So far, it has formed a partnership with Parents Anonymous to provide formal parenting instruction to the mothers, and ACPGSC has formed a partnership with Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Kirshbaum said, "We believe that this collaboration will offer the girls a more intense mentoring opportunity to complement her Girl Scout experience."

Partnerships in Action

This program began with a one-time-only NIJ demonstration grant. Today the program is supported at sites throughout the country with funds from private donations, foundation, and States.

Maryland

Maryland Division of Corrections

United Way of Central Maryland

Private Donations

Tallahassee, Florida

Community Juvenile Justice Partnership Program (Administered by the Florida Attorney General's Office)

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Henderson Foundation

Mount Bethel Baptist Church

Florida Department of Mental Health and Rehabilitation Services

Delaware

Du Pont Merck Pharmaceutical Company

Ohio

The Columbus Foundation

Nationwide Insurance

Arizona

Arizona Community Foundation

Arizona Governor's Office for Children

Valley of the Sun United Way Thunderbird Youth Fund

New Jersey

Schumann Fund of New Jersey

Prudential Foundation

Kentucky

Anonymous Gift

City of Louisville Youth Alliance

Mercer Transportation Company

California

The Edison Company

Outlook

The feasibility of a partnership between Girl Scout councils and correctional facilities has been demonstrated. Such a partnership can be formed with any motivated youth service organization, including those serving boys. The partnership can augment an existing parenting or visitation program or it can be implemented at institutions with no program in place.

Because the programs are based on organizational strength rather than the leadership of individuals, the Maryland and Florida sites have weathered significant turnover in both Girl Scout and correctional personnel. Although organizational reliance provides an "insurance policy," it does not guarantee survival. The jury is still out as to whether the Girl Scouts will be able to sustain the program over time.

High-risk children generally, and this group in particular, are an expensive population to serve in terms of human resources and finances. Survival of the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program will depend, in part, on each participating council's ability to "reinvent" itself to serve high-risk children from "zero parent" families.

Leadership, motivation, management ability, fund development expertise, volunteer recruitment, and coalition building strategies vary from council to council. It is questionable whether councils with insufficient organizational capacity will be able to build the necessary structure to implement or sustain such a program over time.

Survival will also depend, in part, on the correctional institution's willingness to pull its weight in the partnership. Although most correctional facilities cannot contribute direct financial aid, corrections officials can assist Girl Scout partners with coalition building efforts within the criminal justice, business, legal, State, and local government communities. In-kind support, such as detailing those under community service orders and/or boot camp residents to do maintenance work at Girl Scout camps, may also be appreciated by local councils.[22] Making a match between council needs and those services provided by the institution's State-use industries could also be a valued contribution.

A final challenge to both current and future partners is to reexamine the mission of the program. Will it remain a visitation program or will it expand its goals to break intergenerational cycles of criminal justice involvement and other negative social behaviors? If the latter mission is to be assumed, these children and their families will require "high octane" programming. It is not reasonable to expect that a child's negative behaviors will be significantly lessened by a 2-hour meeting held once per week.[23] If the program is to effect long-term behavioral changes, partnerships with other organizations offering complementary services and expertise must be made.[24]

Correctional agencies will also have to be willing to coordinate existing institutional resources with their Girl Scout partners to build a comprehensive intergenerational program. "No one program can be all things to all children or families," said Deborah Lloyd of Florida's Community Intervention Program, Inc. "If you want to make an impact, you cannot serve a child in a vacuum. When you are a youth service organization dealing with at-risk youth, you are eventually going to have to have a family focus in order to succeed." Success in family reunification, inmate recidivism, and delinquency prevention for the child participant cannot realistically

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be expected solely from a visitation program or with a fragmented, less than comprehensive approach.[25]

As for NIJ's continued role, a grant was recently competitively awarded to the University of Baltimore to conduct a research and evaluation effort at the Maryland site. Within budget limits, the Institute plans to continue to provide technical assistance to current and prospective sites.

As the Carnegie task force pointed out, "America's interest in youth waxes and wanes."[26] Maryland's Secretary of Juvenile Services Stuart O. Simms concurred, "If the Girl Scouts are to succeed in positively influencing the lives of our at-risk youth, they must receive sustained and unwavering community support. They cannot shoulder this responsibility alone."

Notes

[1] The Maryland Correctional Institution for Women is a minimum/medium/maximum adult correctional facility for those serving sentences of 6 months and a day or more.

[2] Hairson, C.F., "Family ties during imprisonment: Important to whom and for what?" *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, Vol 18 N1 (March 1991), 87–104; and Browne, D., "Incarcerating Mothers and Parenting," *Journal of Family Violence*, Vol. 4, N2 (June 1989) :211–221.

[3] Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Carol E. Smith is a member of the National Association of Woman Judges (NAWJ). Judge Smith is a past-president of NAWJ's Maryland Chapter, is a member of their national organization's committee on women in prison, and a member of Maryland's Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Advisory Committee.

[4] Gabel, Stewart, "Children of incarcerated and criminal parents: adjustment, behavior, and prognosis." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, Vol. 20, 33–45, 1992; Hungerford, Gregory, "The children of inmate mothers: an exploratory study of children, caretakers and inmate mothers in Ohio," Ohio State University (Dissertation), 1993, 85–89, 96, 105–106, 110.

[5] Gabel, Stewart, and Richard Shindledecker, "Characteristics of children whose parents have been incarcerated." *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, Vol. 44, No. 7 (July 1993):658; Hungerford, 111–112; Lowenstein, A., "Temporary single parenthood: the case of prisoners' families," *Family Relations*, 35 (1986):79–85; Koban, L.A., "Parents in prison: A comparative analysis of the effects of incarceration on the families of men and women," *Research in Law, Deviance, and Social Control*, 5 (1983):171–83; and Sack, W.H., J. Seidler, and S. Thomas, "The children of imprisoned parents: A psychosocial exploration," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 46 (1976):618–28.

[6] Sack, Seidler, and Thomas, 658; Hungerford, 107–108, 112–113, 116; and Stanton, S., *When Mothers Go to Jail*, Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1980.

[7] Hungerford, 104–105; Bloom, Barbara, "Why punish the children? A reassessment of the impact of incarceration on the children of women prisoners," paper presented at American Correctional Association, 122d Congress, 1992; and Jose-Kampfner, Christina, "Michigan program makes children's visits meaningful," *Corrections Today* (August 1991):132–34.

[8] Barnhill S. and Dressel, P., *Three Generations at Risk*, Atlanta, GA: Aid to Imprisoned Mothers, 1991

[9] U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Survey of Youth in Custody, Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1987. See also American Correctional Association, *The Female Offender*. Washington, DC: St. Mary's Press, 1990; or *ACA Statistical Summary*. Washington, DC: American Correctional Association, 1991 (over 50% of all juvenile delinquents imprisoned in 1990 have a parent who has been incarcerated).

[10] Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs, *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*, New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992, 54.

[11] State of Maryland, "Governor's Committee to Study Sentencing and Correctional Alternatives for Women Convicted of Crime," (Final Report), 1988.

[12] Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Kathleen O'Ferrall Friedman chaired the Maryland Governor's Committee to Study Sentencing and Correctional Alternatives for Women Convicted of Crime. Judge Friedman is also a member of the National Association of Woman Judges (NAWJ), a member of their national committee on women in prison and a member of Maryland's Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Advisory Committee. In August 1993 Judge Friedman convened a subcommittee of the NAWJ-Maryland Chapter to review the 1988 Governor's Committee report.

[13] Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 26.

[14] Ibid. 12, 88.

[15] U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Women in Prison*, Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, March 1994.

[16] Datesman, Susan K., and Gloria L. Cales, "'I'm still the same mommy': Maintaining the mother/child relationship in prison," *The Prison Journal*, Vol. LXIII, No. 2 (Autumn-Winter 1983):142.

[17] Hungerford, 90–100.

[18] See Gabel and Shindledecker, 660; Hungerford, 88–90, 117, 124–25; Neto, Virginia V., and LaNelle Marie Bainer, "Mother and wife locked up: A day with the family," *The Prison Journal*, Vol. LXIII, No. 2 (Autumn-Winter 1983):124.

[19] See State of Maryland, Governor's Committee to Study Sentencing and Correctional Alternatives for Women Convicted of Crime (1988): 22–23 (recommends linking parenting instruction with visitation); See also Hungerford, 136 (discussion of need to link visitation to relevant parenting education).

[20] See Hungerford, 142–145 (discussion of need to link children of incarcerated persons with local child welfare and mental health services).

[21] While the need for transition from prison to prerelease is acknowledged, it should also be

recognized that the first break in an inmate parent-child relationship takes place at arrest and jail detention.

[22] See Pitts, Chrystal, "Federal partnerships at work," *Federal Prison Journal* (Winter 1994): 15 (a discussion of use of Federal inmate work crews to maintain and construct facilities on U.S. Forest Service properties).

[23] See Gabel and Shindledecker, 660; See Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 12.

[24] Arella, Lorinda R., "Multiservice adolescent programs: Seeking institutional partnership alternatives," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (1993):283, 284.

[25] See Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 12.

[26] Ibid. 26.

About This Study

This Program Focus was written by Marilyn C. Moses, program manager, National Institute of Justice. If you are interested in receiving technical assistance to implement a Girl Scouts Beyond Bars partnership, contact Ms. Moses at the National Institute of Justice, 633 Indiana Avenue NW, Rm. 805, Washington, DC 20531. Telephone: 202–514–6205.

COVER: Mothers and daughters find new ways of learning about each other through structured play. (Photo By Phil Sears for the *Tallahassee Democrat*)

Findings and conclusions reported here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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